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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Radio Service

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Housekeepers' Chat Tues., Nov., 22/

(NOT FOR PUBLICATION)

Subject: "That 'Pesky' Kitchen Floor." Information, including recipes, from Bureau of Home Economics, U. S. Department of Agriculture. Bulletin available: "Floors and Floor Coverings."

--ooOoo--

I wonder if you have ever moved into an old house, which had perfectly terrible floors. I have in mind a certain kitchen floor, in an old house, in a town not far away. The floor is made of soft wood. It is rough. It has wide cracks. The wood is full of bumps, and splinters, and you don't dare walk on it in your stocking feet. No matter how often it is scrubbed, it never looks clean. This floor is so uneven, that if you are working on a table at one end of the kitchen, before you know it the table is hippity-hopping toward the opposite end of the roo Really, I am not exaggerating -- much. There couldn't be a worse floor in the United States.

This floor is almost too far gone to be reclaimed. I can see no use for it -- except as a Horrible Example -- for it is everything that a kitchen floor should not be.

You know the characteristics of an ideal kitchen floor -- it should be stron, comfortable to walk and stand on, and easy to care for, as well as attractive in appearance. Sometimes an old floor can be made quite presentable, with little work and expense. If it is smooth, and without cracks, it may be finished with a dust-colored paint, that does not show tracks. A kitchen floor should have three coats of paint, and the wood should be clean, dry, and free from dust, before it is painted. If the floor is rough, it may be made smooth, and then covered with felt, and a good quality of linoleum. Linoleum seems to be a better covering for an old kitchen floor than anything else yet tried. It is not expensive; grease and water do not injure it. Linoleum is easy to clean, and comfortable to stand and walk on.

Now let's pretend we are getting ready to treat an old wood floor, so that it may be attractively finished.

First of all, make the floor as tight, level, and smooth, as possible. It may need to be planed, or sandpapered. Pull out all the old tacks, or drive them below the surface of the wood, with a nail set. Then scrub the floor with hot soapsuds, or some other cleansing agent. Rinse it with clear water. Bleach out the stains, with a solution made of 1 teaspoon of oxalic acid, 1 cup of hot water. This liquid is poison, so be careful! Spread it on the stains, and allow it to stand overnight. In the morning, remove all traces of the acid, or it will injure the finish, later. When the floor is thoroughly dry, it may be finished any way you please -- stained, varnished, oiled, or painted. After the first coat of finish has been applied, and allowed to dry, fill any cracks and holes in the floor with crack filler, colored to match the floor.

Use light overlapping strokes in cleaning; heavy strokes rub the dirt in. Cotton batting is good for cleaning places that soil more quickly than the rest, for example, the wall over radiators, registers, and stoves. The wall should be rubbed lightly with the cotton, which should be turned as it becomes soiled. There are, on the market, commercial pastes and powders for cleaning wall papers but these should be applied by an expert. An amateur is likely to have a streaked wall if he attempts to use them.

I promised to give you two recipes today, one for Hot Baked Indian Pudding, and the other for French Vanilla Ice Cream. The Ice Cream is to be served with the Pudding, that is, a spoonful of the ice cream on top of each serving of the hot pudding.

Five ingredients, for Hot Baked Indian Pudding:

5 cups milk.	1 teaspoon salt, and
1/3 cup corn meal	1 teaspoon ginger
1/2 cup molasses.	

Be sure that you have five ingredients: (Repeat)

Cook milk and meal in a double boiler, 20 minutes, add the molasses, salt, and ginger; pour into a buttered pudding dish, and bake for 2 hours in a slow oven. Serve hot with cream or vanilla ice cream.

The Vanilla Ice Cream calls for six ingredients, as follows:

1 quart milk.	3/4 cup sugar.
1/2 pint double cream	1/4 teaspoon salt, and
4 eggs.	1-1/2 teaspoons vanilla.

Six ingredients -- let's check them please: (Repeat)

Prepare as for custard, by pouring some of the heated milk into the lightly beaten eggs, and then cooking the milk and eggs with the sugar and salt, in a double boiler, until the custard coats the spoon. Cool, add the double cream, and vanilla, mix well, and freeze. For the freezing mixture, use 1 part of salt to 4 to 6 parts of ice. Turn the crank slowly, during freezing. Let the cream stand an hour or more to ripen after freezing.

You may look forward to another menu tomorrow, and maybe there will be one or two recipes on the program.

I could spend the whole morning talking about finishing floors, how to make crack filler, how to varnish a floor, how to oil it, or stain it, or paint it. But if I should do this, the questions would never be answered, and the recipes would never be broadcast. So I'll ask you to write to me, if you want to know more about floors. I'll be glad to send you a booklet on floors and floor coverings.

The questions today are of a very practical nature. First question: "What will remove the yellow stain from piano keys?"

The best cleaner for piano keys is wood alcohol. If wood alcohol is not obtainable, use clean warm water, with a mild, neutral soap. Don't have the water too hot, or it may make the keys yellow. Be careful about the soap, too, Soap with a large amount of alkali will discolor the keys.

Second question: "Can you tell me how to make furniture polish at home?"

A good furniture polish may be made by mixing one part of raw linseed oil, with two parts of turpentine. Add a little melted beeswax, if you like.

Third question: "How can I clean a leather rocking chair?"

Leather furniture coverings last longer, and look better, if rubbed occasionally with castor oil, or a commercial leather polish, to restore the oil that gradually dries out of the leather. Rub the liquid in well, and wipe off any excess; otherwise, this film of oil will darken the leather, and soil whatever touches it.

Fourth question: "Please tell me how to remove paint and varnish which have been spattered on the window pane."

Paint or varnish spatters on glass may be dissolved with turpentine or alcohol, or rubbed off with a dull knife.

Fifth question: "How many times a year does a floor need re-waxing?"

Under moderate use, a floor needs re-waxing only two or three times a year. Applying too much wax is a common mistake. The extra wax lies on the surface, in a soft coat, that collects dust, and is easily marred. To clean a waxed floor, sweep it with a soft brush or a mop entirely free from oil. Oil softens wax, and should never be used on it, in any way. About once a week a waxed floor should be given a more thorough cleaning with a cloth wrung out of warm soapy water, or better still, with a cloth moistened with turpentine or gasoline. Water dulls and whitens a waxed floor. Turpentine, or gasoline, dissolves the film of dirty wax on the surface, and leaves it bright. However, in using these liquids, remember that they are inflammable.

Sixth question: "Can you tell me how to clean ordinary plastered and papered walls and ceilings?"

Ordinary plastered and papered walls and ceilings should be cleaned with a soft wall brush, or a broom covered with soft cloth, such as cotton flannel.